

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03  
   INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03  
   SP-02 LAB-04 EPG-02 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15  
   STR-04 CEA-01 IGA-02 AGRE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
   L-03 PA-01 PRS-01 /091 W  
          -----171402Z 036983 /45

R 170950Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4676

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 2648

PASS TO AID/ASIA/BIS AND USDA

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: EAID, EAGR, BG  
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT ZIA'S VIEWS ON THE FOOD PROBLEM

1. PRESIDENT ZIA HOSTED A DINNER FOR ABOUT A DOZEN  
CHIEFS OF MISSION ON MONDAY, MAY 16. ALSO PRESENT WERE  
THE DCMLAS AS WELL AS PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORS FOR  
COMMERCE SAIFUR RAHMAN AND FOR PLANNING DR. M. N. HUDA.

2. THERE WAS NO GENERAL DISCUSSION DURING THE BUFFET  
DINNER, BUT I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF A SHORT PRIVATE  
CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT ZIA TO COMPLIMENT HIM ON  
THE EMPHASIS HE IS PLACING IN RECENT SPEECHES ON THE  
NEED TO BOOST AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN GENERAL, AND  
TO INCREASE THE OUTPUT OF FOODGRAINS BY AT LEAST  
50 PERCENT IN PARTICULAR. ZIA SAID HE IS FIRMLY  
COMMITTED TO THIS AND BELIEVES HE CAN MAKE A "SIGNIFICANT  
DENT" IN THE FOOD DEFICIT PROBLEM WITHIN THE NEXT TWO  
YEARS.

3. I TOLD PRESIDENT ZIA THAT WE BELIEVE THE PRICE  
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PAID TO THE FARMER FOR HIS FOODGRAIN IS A KEY FACTOR  
IN PROVIDING THE INCENTIVE FOR HIM TO INCREASE HIS  
PUTPUT. I WAS THEREFORE GREATLY PLEASED DURING MY  
RECENT TALK WITH DR. HUDA (DACCA 2445) TO LEARN THAT  
THE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO REDUCE THE SUBSIDIES THROUGH  
THE RATION SYSTEM DURING FY 78, TO UNDERTAKE A VIGOROUS  
VOLUNTARY PROCUREMENT DRIVE LATER THIS YEAR AND TO

SET THE PRICE FOR PROCUREMENT BEFORE THE FARMER ACTUALLY PLANTS HIS CROP. I SAID WE STRONGLY SUPPORTED THESE AND SIMILAR STEPS AND NOTED THAT WITHOUT SUCH MOVES, IT WAS MOST DIFFICULT FOR US TO JUSTIFY CONTINUED HIGH LEVELS OF PL-480 FOOD AID.

4. I ALSO TOLD ZIA, AS WE HAD EARLIER THAT DAY INFORMED HIS STAFF, THAT WE HAD RECEIVED AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE THE SUPPLY OF AN ADDITIONAL 150,000 TONS OF U.S. FOODGRAIN THIS YEAR. ZIA EXPRESSED HIS GREAT APPRECIATION AND SAID THIS WOULD BE MOST USEFUL TO SUPPORT HIS EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE STABILIZATION. HE REITERATED THAT HIS GOAL IS SELF-SUFFICIENCY, BUT THAT FOR A TIME BANGLADESH CONTINUES TO NEED SUBSTANTIAL OUTSIDE HELP.

5. IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION, AIR VICE MARSHAL MAHMOOD TOLD ME THAT PRESIDENT ZIA IS PREPARING A LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER ON THE FOODGRAIN PROBLEM. WHILE MAHMOOD HAD NOT YET SEEN A TEXT OF THE LETTER, HE FELT IT WOULD, IN GENERAL, EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR OUR ASSISTANCE IN THE AREA OF FOODGRAINS AND ASK FOR CONTINUED SUPPORT. HE WAS NOT AWARE WHETHER THE LETTER WOULD INCLUDE A REQUEST FOR A SPECIFIC AMOUNT OF ADDITIONAL FOODGRAINS THIS YEAR. I REITERATED TO MAHMOOD, AS I HAD IN A PREVIOUS CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT ZIA (DACCA 2217), THAT, GIVEN BANGLADESH'S CURRENT STOCK POSITION, ANTICIPATED DRAWDOWN RATE AND ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER DONORS DURING THE NEXT SIX MONTHS, I COULD NOT SUPPORT A REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL

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PL-480 FOODGRAINS AT THIS TIME. I WOULD, HOWEVER, KEEP THE SITUATION UNDER CONSTANT REVIEW AND RECOMMEND TO WASHINGTON ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES IF THERE SHOULD BE A NATURAL DISASTER DURING THE SUMMER (PRESIDENT ZIA SAID HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF SEVERE FLOODING), OR IF THE DOMESTIC CROP SHOULD FALL BELOW EXPECTATIONS.

MASTERS

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FOOD SHORTAGE, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Subject:** PRESIDENT ZIA'S VIEWS ON THE FOOD PROBLEM  
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**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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